

Wayne State University
Academic Senate
Minutes of the Curriculum & Instruction Committee
December 9, 2009

Present: T. Austin, V. Bielat, W. Brusilow, C. Collins, K. Feathers, A. Furtado, J. Moseley, R. Reynolds, A. Saperstein, E. Young, A. Vlasopolos, A. Retish.

Absent with notice: A. Cobbs, V. Dallas, J. Ju

Absent: H. Shapiro, S. Baskin

No changes suggested for Agenda. Agenda approved.

Minutes from November 11, 2009 were approved with minor typographical changes submitted directly to K. Feathers from A. Vlasopolos. Motion to approve by A. Saperstein, second by A. Vlasopolos.

Old Business: SET Score/ASSET Report

A. Furtado began discussion with need for SET to evaluate the course in addition to evaluating the instructor/instruction. A. Vlasopolos offered that this may be something that Department needs to consider developing (English Dept. has its own course evaluations). R. Reynolds also brought up issues related to online course evaluation and that the current SET does not do well in evaluating online courses. Also stated that statistics are not provided for courses where the response rate is less than 5 submissions and posed question regarding requiring SET administration to automatically send SET comments when the response rate is less than 5. A. Retish offered that this year the SET office combined scores for graduate and undergraduate in combined courses. K. Feathers added that scores can be requested, but A. Retish reported requests go unfulfilled.

K. Feathers discussed the process of gathering SET data and Scatter Plots (SPs). SPs do not come from OTL as indicated by T. Wilhelm. She reported that H. Siddiqui responded that SPs are produced every semester and sent to colleges. Ratios are recorded in SPs at university, college and department level. R. Reynolds (Comp. Sci.) reported he gets SPs via e-mail. Several attendees reported they never see SPs.

T. Wilhelm also suggested that latest contract does not include anything about SETs, but A. Retish stated that Article XXIX Section A of contracts discusses teacher evaluation. A. Retish also stated that if we want to develop a new SET, a committee would need to be formed to be in alignment with AAUP-AFT contract.

A question was posed regarding C&I Committee and what is our role in this SET discussion. Are we making a decision on whether the interpretive scale from the ASSET report be implemented?

V. Bielat posed a question regarding how new faculty get information regarding SETs, available information and reports and guidelines for interpretation. It was suggested by A. Vlasopolos that Policy Committee send the information to the Faculty Affairs Committee to develop an information resource about SETs, SPs and the meaning of and how to interpret the information.

C. Collins asked how does this align, what does it mean to explain SPs, what do we need to do with the information? A. Vlasopolos offered that it is a useful tool to see how you figure among your colleagues.

R. Reynolds noted that SPs would be useful in Salary Committees as different departments have different spreads of class evaluation SET scores available to decision making committees. A. Furtado followed this with a comment that he would like a separate report on multisection courses. A. Retish noted at this point we were back to the beginning of our discussion.

J. Moseley stated that we need to investigate what is happening in other institutions regarding student evaluations of teaching. R. Reynolds followed this with a statement that we need to develop an online instrument. There needs to be a recommendation for changes in the SETs and they need to be reviewed again. It has been 14 years since the ASSET report.

A. Saperstein moved to make a recommendation to Policy Committee to develop a committee to review SETs and other forms of evaluation. Motion seconded by V. Bielat.

R. Reynolds stated he is on a search committee for a new Director of Online Services and that person needs to be involved in such a committee. We need to consider other evaluation of teaching techniques to meet the needs of our varied and diverse class delivery systems. SET needs to reflect that diversity and assess performance in a way that reflects that diversity. It was noted that we cannot tell departments how to deal with SET information—they will deal with it in their own way. R. Reynolds noted that a multiplicity of approaches would be needed. V. Bielat noted that we need to specify in the charge to any new committee that they need to recommend how they would accommodate the ability to distribute evaluations online and evaluation of online courses.

K. Feathers asked if departments include all coded courses (example: RLL) in SETS. A. Saperstein explains that SPs are Department, College and University (not by course code). C. Collins noted that SETS really need to accommodate different types of teaching and environments, such as: (in music) individual lesson courses vs. orchestra courses, online courses, large lecture, seminar courses, etc. It was asked if there was a way in current SETs to request data based on different designations, methods and environments.

Statement made that we either evaluate based on difference or not. A simple form causes the tool to be used inaccurately.

A. Vlasopolos noted the tension between what we need for college and university evaluation vs. a real evaluation of teaching, which is a time intensive process. However, could we at least develop a SET instrument that is a little more refined. A. Saperstein described how you can interpret SPs crudely. R. Reynolds stated that having SPs is very useful, but you need to separate by the mechanism of course delivery.

Question posed: Are SET scores public. Answer was yes, but only if students make a FOIA request. However, they are defined as public information. Member stated that many student use *Rate My Professor*, which is an even more inaccurate instruction.

C. Collins notes that hopefully this will change. We are really just beginning to look at online course delivery in a comprehensive manner.

K. Feathers asked the committee if there were any other issues that needed to be included in the recommendation rationale to Policy Committee. K. Feathers stated she will draw up the recommendation and send it to the committee for approval. She will include the previous motion about SPs and make the case for the suggestions offered by committee members in today's meeting. She will include a recommendation for an evaluation of processes used by other universities in student evaluation of teaching. She noted the ASSET report was from 1995 and it needed a new look and reconsideration.

Meeting Dates Winter 2010 Semester

K. Feathers stated that she has asked Angie to send out forms for our committee meeting day/times for Winter Term. She asked that everyone please be generous in stating availability times.

K. Feathers adjourned meeting at 2:30 PM

Thanks to Veronica Bielat for taking the minutes for this meeting.